

An Elegant Wilderness: Great Camps and Grand Lodges of the Adirondacks (The Architecture of Leisure)

Gladys Montgomery

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The Victorian Society in America Metropolitan Chapter 2011 Award for Publication-Architectural History

The Adirondack Center for Writing 2011 Literary Award-Best Book, Nonfiction

The first book to place the rustic Adirondack architectural style in the context of the cultural, social, and environmental history, An Elegant Wilderness, showcases the intensely private retreats set into the pine forests on the shores of the region s shimmering lakes.

Open earlier to tourism and more accessible than the western United States, the Adirondack region is where many urbanites of the Industrial Age came to experience the wilderness. It was in the Adirondacks that the constricting social proprieties relaxed, that city swells hunted in deer-filled forests and angled in trout-stocked lakes, that women shed their corsets to hike, fish, and play tennis, and that children learned to appreciate the great outdoors.

Among the owners of the Great Camps there were the mining magnates Berthold Hochschild, Daniel Guggenheim, and Adolph Lewisohn, financiers J. Pierpont Morgan, Otto Kahn, and Isaac Newton Seligman, New York governor Levi Morton, President Benjamin Harrison, and the prominent philosopher William James and neuroscientist James Jackson Putnam. Women camp owners of note included Lucy Carnegie, Margaret Emerson (Vanderbilt), and Marjorie Merriweather Post.

Published by Acanthus Press in collaboration with The Adirondack Museum, An Elegant Wilderness combines architectural, social, and cultural history with biography, and evocative archival black-and-white archival photographs of rustic homes, idyllic lakes, and recreational pastimes, most of which are published for the first time.



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